

Outreach:

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Another survey, conducted over the phone, showed a higher percentage of Hispanic people than white people are vaccinated, he said, but he was not confident these numbers accurately represents the entire county.

The best numbers, he said, show Hispanic people are less vaccinated than other groups. Still, he said, the county is closing the gap on this difference and more Hispanic people are getting vaccinated.

The director gave reasons for the disparity. For one, he said, the difference between ethnicities in vaccination rate “started that way.” The virus hit the Hispanic community very hard, he said, infecting workers in agriculture and food processing, jobs people cannot do at home.

Vaccines during the onset of their rollout went to hospital workers, first responders and teachers, he said, jobs that tend to have more white people.

There are other barriers to vaccination among Hispanic people, he explained, such as wariness of a new vaccine, distrust of government and a language barrier.

As his department and others have tried to address issues of vaccination among Hispanic people, the difference between ethnic groups is closing, he said. Twenty-four percent of all vaccinations are being given to Hispanic people, who represent 28% of the population, he said.

The director credited the work by community organizations, which have educated individuals and made vaccinations more available than they had in the past. Vaccination events, often staffed by Spanish-speaking people, are taking place. Also, several local businesses have hosted clinics for workers to get vaccinated while remaining on the clock, Fiumara said.

Worries with vaccination

At the New Horizons event, Garcia agreed with Fiumara’s assessment of barriers to vaccination. He added, though, there are other concerns, including immigration.

Some people, he said, do not want to get vaccinated because they are undocumented. They worry about putting their names down on lists the government can track and later use to deport them. Also, Garcia said, many people are in the process of gaining citizenship and they worry that receiving any aid at all, even vaccination services, will cancel their efforts to become U.S. citizens.

Sergio Gonzalez, a nurse at the clinic, said he has been to other clinics, some draw more than a hundred people and others attract only a handful, and spoken with people about health and immigration concerns. He expressed confidence that immigration officials were not tracking people at vaccination events.

“The information is private,” he said.

Andrea Odle, Oregon Health Authority assistant regional COVID-19 testing and vaccine coordinator, also was on hand. A fluent Spanish speaker, she said it is important for people to receive information about the vaccine in their first language. When individuals hear information in the language they know best, she said, they are more likely to understand and trust it.

Another nurse at the event, Christine Daniel, said she hopes people will overcome their concerns about the vaccination.

“It’s very important for health issues,” she said. “People are getting sick. People are dying. We want to get back to normal, and vaccinations will help us get there.”



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

A sign in Spanish and English advertises a COVID-19 vaccine clinic Friday, Dec. 10, 2021, at New Horizons drug and alcohol rehabilitation center in Hermiston.



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian

Jose Garcia streams a video of a COVID-19 vaccination clinic on Facebook Live on Friday, Dec. 10, 2021, to get out word of the event in Hermiston.



Boardman Chamber of Commerce

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DEC 15TH, 2021

CHAMBER LUNCHEON

12 PM on Boardman Chamber of Commerce Facebook Page

Guest speakers:
BOARDMAN FIRE RESCUE

Email info@boardmanchamber.org if you are unable to view on Facebook and would like a Zoom link

Chamber After 5 Networking Event

Thursday December 16th at 5 PM
SAGE Center | 101 Olson Rd.

A free networking event and community grand opening for

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2022 DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS AWARDS NOMINATIONS

THE BOARDMAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IS NOW ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS

for the 2022 Distinguished Citizens Awards Banquet. Let us know which Boardman businesses and community members have made the biggest impact in 2021.

Submit your nominations by January 15, 2022

Scan QR code to complete form or go to bit.ly/3phXqql

Formulario de nominación disponible en español

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